

ARTICLE ALERT



INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER, U.S. EMBASSY JAKARTA

Volume 1, January 2009

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Inauguration 2009



January 18: President-elect Barack Obama retraces Abraham Lincoln's inaugural path on a train ride from Philadelphia to Washington and welcomes Americans to the inaugural festivities from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

The theme for the 2009 inauguration, "A New Birth of Freedom," commemorates the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth.

January 19: President-elect Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden participate in a day of community service in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

January 20: President-elect Obama and President Bush travel together from the White House to the U.S. Capitol. For the first time, the entire National Mall is open to those wishing to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

- Vice President-elect Joe Biden is sworn into office.
- President-elect Obama takes the oath of office using

Lincoln's Bible, and then delivers his inaugural address from the Capitol steps.

- President-elect Obama escorts former President Bush to a departure ceremony;
- George and Laura Bush leave Washington to return to Texas as private citizens.
- Festivities continue, including the 56th Inaugural Parade from the Capitol to the White House and inaugural balls throughout the city.

For more information, see www.america.gov

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

- U.S. Presidential Oath of Office

About the IRC:

The U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center (IRC) in Jakarta is a specialized Reference and Research Library. Its goal is to provide accurate, up-to-date information to the public about topics such as U.S. foreign policy, legislation, social issues, economics and trade. High speed Internet computers, printer and photo copier are provided at the IRC for library users.

Books, articles, and web-sites described in the Article Alert present a diversity of views in order to keep our IRC users abreast of current issues in the United States. These items represent the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official U.S. Government policy.

U.S. Presidential Transitions

We often read or hear about turmoil before, during, or after elections around the world. An important characteristic of democracy in the United States, however, is the regularly recurring peaceful transfer of power from one president to the next. Americans know when the next presidential election will take place – the Tuesday after the first Monday in November every four years. And power will be transferred to the newly elected (or re-elected) president on January 20 of the following year.

This e-journal is available online at:
<http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/0109.html>



Inside this issue:

Inauguration 2009	1
U.S. Presidential Transitions	2
The Obama Administration	2
Democracy and Global Issues	2
Economic Security	2
International Security	3
U.S. Society and Values	3

ARTICLE ALERT

Barack Obama



Barack Obama will be the United States' first African-American

president. Learn more of his personal story at <http://change.gov/learn/presidentelect/>

Joe Biden



Vice President Joe Biden, a longtime member of the Senate Foreign Re-

lations Committee, brings to the administration decades of legislative and foreign policy experience.

Learn more of his personal story at <http://change.gov/learn/vicepresidentelect/>

The Obama Administration

1. Brooks, Michelle Austein **BARACK OBAMA'S CABINET SELECTIONS COMPLETE**

Choices show president-elect's commitment to economy, security, science. Among those Obama has selected to serve in his Cabinet are two Republicans.

Currently available online at <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/December/20081230114759hmnietua0.4913294.html?CP.rss=true>

2. THE FUTURE CABINET

The President-elect has already announced the

nominees for high-level appointments. Currently available online at <http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/cabinet.html>

Democracy and Global Issues

3. Bumiller, Elisabeth **INSIDE THE PRESIDENCY** (National Geographic, January 2009)

Although the occupant of the White House changes, most of the routines for the staff that assist the president stay the same. Bumiller gives an inside look at life in the White House or on the road with the president; she interviews Gary Walters, former chief usher of the Executive Mansion, who served as a manager of the White House for 31 years, spanning six presidencies. Currently available online at <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/print/2009/01/president/bumiller-text>

4. Dorroh, Jennifer **ENDANGERED SPECIES** (American Journalism Review, vol. 30, no. 6, December 2008-January 2009, pp. 20-27)

Under pressure to cut costs, more newspapers are cutting their Washington bureaus. And while the reporters experienced at covering the nation's capital go on to find jobs with niche markets, they are not informing the general public any longer. The sad outcome endangers American democracy, experts say, because only those in power are informed about what is happening and how to control it. Currently available online at <http://www.ajr.org/Article.aspx?id=4645>

5. Hua Hsu **THE END OF WHITE AMERICA?** The Atlantic Monthly, January/February 2009

The Election of Barack Obama is just the most startling manifestation of a larger trend: the gradual erosion of "whiteness" as the touchstone of what it means to be American. If the

end of white America is a cultural and demographic inevitability, what will the new mainstream look like—and how will white Americans fit into it? What will it mean to be white when whiteness is no longer the norm? And will a post-white America be less racially divided—or more so? Currently available online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200901/end-of-whiteness>

6. Sullivan, Andrew **WHY I BLOG** (Atlantic, November, 2008)

Sullivan describes the evolution of his blogging, which he began in 2000. Sullivan's article outlines the many challenges he has faced and lessons he has learned from this new medium. Currently available online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200811/andrew-sullivan-why-i-blog>

Economic Issues

7. Atman, Roger C. **THE GREAT CRASH, 2008: GEOPOLITICAL SETBACK FOR THE WEST.** Foreign Affairs, January/February 2009

The financial crisis has called into serious question the credibility of western governments and may precipitate an eastward shift of power. Currently

available online at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20090101faessay88101/roger-c-altman/the-great-crash-2008.html>

Economic Issues, continued...

8. Christy, David **BOOT-STRAPPING TRADE** (World Policy Journal, Vol. 25, no. 4, Winter 2008/2009, pp. 127-131)

The lessons of the Smoot-Hawley tariff act make it easy to advocate free trade, says the author, a Washington trade lawyer. However, he notes that U.S. policies must recognize both the benefits and the costs of free trade, and that it must be supported as a matter of smart politics in a time of economic trouble. More needs to be done, how-

ever, to avoid unacceptable social costs. The WTO will remain an important institution despite its detractors, says Christy; signaling U.S. continued support for trade liberalization would give it a boost. However, he argues that there is little that any U.S. administration could do to speed the Doha Round, and that the U.S. should not take anything off the table because any retrenchment would have a negative impact on the talks. He praises the G20's pledge not to erect trade barriers for

at least a year, but he raises a possibility that the U.S. and other WTO members may have to cut a few corners on trade to find the way out of the crisis despite this pledge. He also argues against opening NAFTA in an attempt to renegotiate it as the U.S. "would have to pay Canada and Mexico dearly for every change we were to seek." Currently available online at <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/toc/wopj/25/4?cookieSet=1>

19 January '08

Martin Luther King Day

"Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve."
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

<http://www.mlkday.org/>

International Security

9. Alarcon, Daniel **YOU DO NOT REPRESENT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** (The Virginia Quarterly Review, vol. 84, no. 3, Summer 2008, pp. 168-179)

As one of a group of American

writers touring the Middle East on a U.S. Department of State tour, the author visited various universities in the region. The purpose of the tour was to hear what locals thought about the U.S. government, in general, and the Iraq war, specifically. Although the author and

his group of fellow writers were repeatedly told by their hosts that they did not represent the American government, the Middle Eastern locals tended to view the group as representatives of the U.S. government and questioned them as such.

U.S. Society and Values

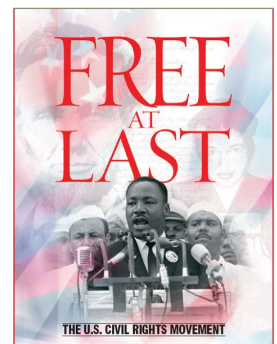
10. Holmes, Emory **A PRICELESS INHERITANCE** (American Legacy, Winter 2009, pp. 23-30)

With her salary as a librarian at the University of Southern California and UCLA, and later her Social Security checks, Mayme A. Clayton purchased rare photos, films, books and memorabilia that became the largest collection of African-American artifacts ever amassed by one person. Her son Avery is currently creating the Mayme Agnew Clayton

Library and Museum in Culver City, California. He says his mother's life mission for over 40 years had been to preserve endangered African-American artifacts "so that people will know that blacks did great things." The collection is now a resource "of incalculable national worth," according to author Emory Holmes

11. Robelen, Erik **STRATEGY RETOOLED AT GATES** (Education Week, Vol. 28, No. 13, November 19, 2008, pp. 1, 10-11)

In rolling out plans last week to revamp its high school strategy and launch a major new effort on the postsecondary front, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is undertaking a more sweeping approach to grant-making that appears aimed at reshaping some core elements of the U.S. education system. Currently available online at http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/11/19/13gates-2_ep.h28.html



New e-book

Free At Last - The U.S. Civil Rights Movement

This book recounts how African-American slaves and their descendants struggled to win — both in law and in practice — the civil rights enjoyed by other Americans. It is a story of dignified persistence and struggle, a story that produced great heroes and heroines, and one that ultimately succeeded by forcing Americans to confront squarely the shameful gap between their universal principles of equality and justice and the inequality, injustice, and oppression faced by millions of their fellow citizens. Available online at <http://www.america.gov/publications/books->

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1. () BARACK OBAMA'S CABINET SELECTIONS
COMPLETE
2. () THE FUTURE CABINET
3. () INSIDE THE PRESIDENCY
4. () ENDANGERED SPECIES
5. () THE END OF WHITE AMERICA?
6. () WHY I BLOG
7. () THE GREAT CRASH, 2008
8. () BOOTSTRAPPING TRADE
9. () YOU DO NOT REPRESENT THE GOVERNMENT OF
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10. () A PRICELESS INHERITANCE
11. () STRATEGY RETOOLED AT GATES

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- () Free At Last - The U.S. Civil Rights Movement
- () U.S. Presidential Transitions

